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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 213th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 22 February 1995 at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. CISSE (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN ON THE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS AND THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE, HELD AT CASABLANCA, MOROCCO, ON 10-11 AND 13-14 DECEMBER 1994

2. The CHAIRMAN reported that he had represented the Committee at the Summit Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and at the Ministerial Meeting which had preceded it. The Summit had coincided with the Organization's twenty-fifth anniversary. The State of Palestine, which was a full member of the Organization, had been represented by a large delegation headed by President Yasser Arafat. The report of the Secretary-General of the Organization had examined the Israeli-Arab-Palestinian conflict in depth, as well as the specific resolutions and decisions adopted in that regard. The second item on the agenda had been devoted to the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the status of Al-Quds al-Sharif, the Al-Quds Fund and the waqf, the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and the occupation of Lebanese territory by Israel. The statements made by the different delegations had confirmed the importance that they continued to attach to the Palestinian problem.

3. The Summit had sought to encourage the peace process between Israel and Palestine, without overlooking the difficulties and dangers it presented, and had deplored the delays - caused by Israeli intransigence - in implementing the timetable established by the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. In the Casablanca Declaration issued at the end of the Summit, the Organization had expressed its support for the peace process and had reaffirmed the need to arrive at a just and lasting peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978); the "land for peace" proposal; recovery of all the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif, the Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon; and the guarantee of the Palestinian people's sovereignty over its territory and of its right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital. The declaration had also deplored the delaying tactics used by Israel to postpone the implementation of internationally binding resolutions.

4. In the final communiqué issued following the Ministerial Conference, the Foreign Ministers had reaffirmed that the question of Palestine and Al-Quds al-Sharif was the foremost cause of all Muslims and had expressed their solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization in its just fight to eradicate the after-effects of Israeli occupation and establish Palestinian national institutions on Palestinian soil. They had expressed support for the peace process in the Middle East and had welcomed the agreements signed in that regard. They had called for the return of Al-Quds al-Sharif as capital of the Palestinian State, an end to Jewish settlements in Palestinian and Arab territories, and the dismantling of existing settlements. Lastly, they had

demanded the release of Palestinian prisoners, the return of deportees and an end to the collective sanctions imposed by Israel.

5. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that the Al-Quds Committee has also met in Morocco, in January 1995. The Chairman of that Committee had requested the Ambassador of Morocco to arrange for the statement issued on that occasion to be distributed as an official United Nations document.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1995 (A/AC.183/1995/CRP.1)

6. Mr. CASSAR (Malta), Rapporteur, introducing the Committee's draft programme of work for 1995 (A/AC.183/1995/CRP.1), said that it sought to define the role to be played by the Committee at a time of great challenges for the Palestinian people. Section I of the draft programme summarized the mandate of the Committee. Section II identified the priority issues to be addressed by the Committee in 1995, namely, promoting support for the ongoing peace process and for the Declaration of Principles and subsequent implementation agreements and monitoring the situation on the ground; mobilizing international assistance for the Palestinian people; and encouraging constructive consideration of the major issues to be negotiated at a later stage with a view to promoting a final settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions. Lastly, section III described the activities planned by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights in 1995.

7. The draft programme of work of the Committee for 1995 was adopted.

PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM, THE EUROPEAN NGO SYMPOSIUM AND THE INTERNATIONAL NGO MEETING ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, 27-28 FEBRUARY 1995, UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK (Working Paper No. 1)

8. The CHAIRMAN said that, following consultations between the Officers of the Committee and the various coordinating committees for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on Palestine, it had been decided to hold a single preparatory meeting for the North American, International and European NGO meetings. He took it that the Committee wished to adopt Working Paper No. 1, containing the provisional agenda of the meeting.

9. It was so decided.

UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 20-23 MARCH 1995, RIO DE JANEIRO (Working Paper No. 2)

10. The CHAIRMAN said that Working Paper No. 2 contained the provisional programme for the Seminar and symposium. He took it that the Committee wished to adopt Working Paper No. 2.

11. It was so decided.

APPLICATIONS BY NGOs FOR ACCREDITATION WITH THE COMMITTEE (Working Paper No. 3)

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, after careful perusal of the programmes and activities of the NGOs listed in Working Paper No. 3, the regional coordinating committees for NGOs had recommended them all for accreditation with the Committee. The Committee's approval of their applications would enable those organizations to participate more fully in the events organized by the Committee. He took it that the Committee wished to adopt Working Paper No. 3.

13. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

14. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis had reached an impasse, mainly because Israel, the occupying Power, was pursuing its settlements policy, in violation of international humanitarian law, Security Council resolutions and the letter and spirit of the Agreement reached between the two sides. The Israeli Government had taken a number of punitive measures against the Palestinian people which included closing off the Palestinian territories and isolating Jerusalem, thereby not only preventing Palestinian workers from seeking jobs on which they had become dependent but also cutting off the Gaza Strip from the West Bank, parts of the West Bank from each other, and Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, as well as isolating the entire Palestinian territory from the outside world.

15. As a result of Israel's position, there had been no progress in the implementation of the second phase of the Declaration of Principles. The redeployment of Israeli forces in the rest of the West Bank and the holding of Palestinian elections, both of which were an integral part of the second phase, had been delayed. International efforts had failed to alter the Israeli position, and the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization had been meeting to consider an appropriate response.

16. He recalled that, in early 1994, important consultations had been held at United Nations Headquarters among members of the Security Council, the Chairman of the Committee and members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries with a view to taking action to secure an end to all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. The Chairman of the Group of Arab States was about to request a meeting of the Security Council and one possibility might be for the Council to adopt a resolution on the situation. He hoped that members of the Committee were ready to support the Palestinian people and the Office of the Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.